

GARLAND COUNTY
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT

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ANNUAL
REPORT

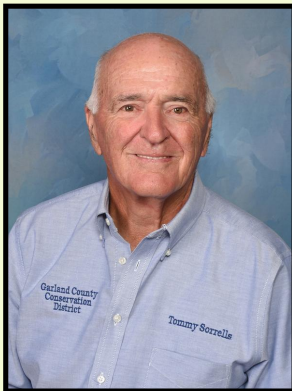


MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Garland County Conservation District to plan and carry out programs to protect, maintain and enhance the soil, water and other related natural resources for now and the future. We strive to guide all residents of Garland County in the efficient and wise use of our natural resources.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

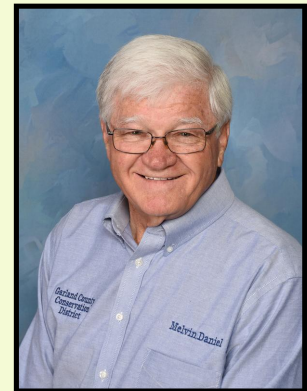
GCCD is led by a board consisting of five local landowners known as directors. The qualified electors in the district elect three directors to three-year terms and the two others are appointed by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Division. These are local citizens who are familiar with the local soil and water problems. Board meetings are held once monthly where directors run the district's business without pay.



Tommy Sorrells
Chairman



Doug Meredith
Vice Chairman



Melvin Daniel
Secretary/Treasurer



David Parker
Director



Rick Davis
Director

- Office Personnel**
- Hesper Hortman
District Manager
 - Terry Hunter
Retiree Technician
 - Andres Aponte
NRCS District Conservationist
 - Larry Gray
NRCS MLRA Office Leader
 - Elizabeth Gray
NRCS MLRA Soil Scientist
 - Matt Bruce
NRCS Project Engineer
 - Tracy Phillips
NRCS Project Engineer
 - Kelly Bufkin
Farm Bill Biologist, Quail Forever

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION DISTRICT?

Conservation districts are political subdivisions of the State of Arkansas. They are a creation of popular vote of resident landowners for the purpose of conserving our land and water resources as authorized by Act No. 197 of the Arkansas General Assembly of 1937; the Nation's first conservation district law. Conservation districts are local governments at work. The purpose of this district is to plan and carry out programs for the conservation and efficient use of the land, water and related natural resources of Garland County. In doing so, it serves as the medium through which all individuals, agencies, organizations and institutions with conservation interest can efficiently work together to solve local natural resource conservation and help forecast future needs. The idea behind the formation is to keep decision making on soil and water conservation matters at the local level.

The Lake Hamilton Soil and Water Commission was organized on June 10, 1941. On October 15, 1971, the name was changed to Garland County Conservation District. The district has and will continue to assist local landowners with natural resource conservation issues.

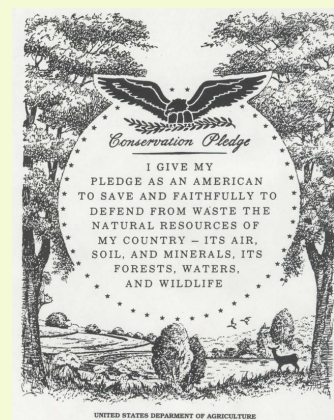
Technical assistance is provided to the District through an agreement between the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Garland County Conservation District. NRCS is partnered with the District office to provide conservation related services. The District's missions are met with many thanks to the financial support from and coordination with the Garland County Quorum Court and Arkansas Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Division.

TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDER

Technical Service Providers (TSPs) offer services to agricultural producers such as farmers, ranchers and private forest landowners on behalf of the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS). TSPs also help these producers plan, design, and implement conservation practices or develop conservation activity plans to improve agricultural operations. GCCD's District Manager participates in this program daily earning the district \$2445 in TSP funds for 2020.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP) FOR FY2020

- 17 applications for EQIP were completed
- 8 EQIP applications were funded
- Federal cost share dollars for EQIP was approximately \$86,500
- Resource concerns were addressed for approximately 479 acres



HOW DO WE HELP GARLAND COUNTY LANDOWNERS?



BEAVER ERADICATION PROGRAM

The beaver control program is administered through the ADA Natural Resources Division and Arkansas conservation districts. ADA NRD along with the Garland County Quorum Court provide funding for the program. Only beavers trapped in Garland County by licensed trappers are eligible for the \$15 per tail bounty. The district paid trappers for the eradication of 72 nuisance beavers this year.



POULTRY REGISTRATION

In 2003 the 84th General Assembly passed nutrient management legislation to address water quality, with ADA NRD as administrator and conservation districts responsible for registering operators and producers.



THISTLE AWARENESS PROGRAM

The district continues to monitor the problem of thistle in this county. Along with the local University of Arkansas Extension Service, we educate the landowners of the seriousness of the problem. We provide an annual report to the State of Arkansas listing specific species and control measures used to control and or eradicate thistle.



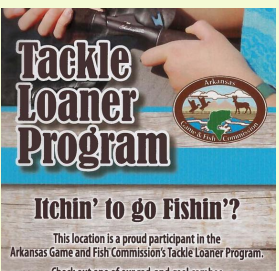
LLWG MEETING

The GCCD hosts a Locally Led Workgroup meeting yearly. NRCS works along with Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Arkansas Forestry Commission, Quail Forever and Garland County Extension Service to identify local natural resource concerns. Soil erosion, inadequate wildlife habitat and water quality degradation were among the concerns addressed.



ASSESSMENTS AND PROPOSALS

Having a conservation district in the county helps to facilitate water and sewer grants to be awarded to the city and county. The ADA NRD can use the district as a contact for gathering information from the Quorum Court as well as the County Judge. The district uses local connections and resources to prepare proposals for grants and assessments for other projects that benefit the county.



AGFC TACKLE LOANER PROGRAM

GCCD is a proud participant in the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Tackle Loaner Program. The district office has 16 rod and reel combos available for individuals to "check out" free of charge.

PLAT BOOKS AND MAPS



Garland County Conservation District is the exclusive seller of plat books and wall maps in Garland County. We also provide landowners and businesses with flood plain information. Ariel and topographic photos are available upon request.

LICENSE PLATES



Specialty license plates promoting conservation are available at three Garland County revenue offices. The GCCS receives \$20 from each plate sold. A total of 44 plates were sold in 2020.

ANNUAL NUT AND BULB SALE



Assorted nuts from South Georgia Pecan Company are available for order during the month of October. Once delivered, the nuts are ready for pickup at the district office just in time for Thanksgiving. During nut sale pick up we also offered indoor Holiday bulb gift sets for purchase. A total of 1915 pounds of nuts were sold!

RENTAL EQUIPMENT

GCCD offers equipment for local landowners to rent for use on their property. Funds received are put back into the community through educational workshops, college scholarships and program outreach.



LOG SPLITTER



NO-TILL SEED DRILL



PASTURE SPRAYER

APPROXIMATELY 130 ACRES WERE SEEDED IN PASTURE GRASSES THIS YEAR BY RENTERS, TOTALING OVER \$800 IN PROCEEDS

THANK YOU

It is with our sincere gratitude that we say Thank You to the Garland County Judge and Quorum Court. Without their support, the Garland County Conservation District would not be able to provide as many services to the land users in our county.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Our quarterly newsletter, News and Views, is published and delivered via mail and email to over 150 subscribers. Through this publication we share information on programs, community involvement and current events. Anyone can sign up to receive their copy by contacting the district office or visiting our website.

GCCD WEBSITE

Making conservation information accessible to the public is essential to saving our natural resources. Through the district website www.garlandcountycd.org individuals are introduced to our staff, programs services and products. Downloadable versions of our annual report, newsletter and order forms for our nut sale are available here as well.

FACEBOOK

In today's world, social media gives us the ability to reach audiences that may not be familiar with who we are. The district's Facebook page is updated frequently with news and events, making interaction easy.

EARTH TEAM-NRCS

Earth Team volunteers help NRCS to accomplish its mission. Volunteer opportunities are available to anyone 14 years or older; students, retirees, individuals and groups. Student volunteers spent almost 20 hours this year assisting MLRA Soil Survey along with the district office with various tasks.

ARKANSAS GAME AND FISH WILDLIFE CONSERVATION GRANT PROGRAM

Through a partnership between the Division of Rural Services and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, portions of county fine monies are converted into grant funds for conservation education programs. These funds are given back to the county where the fines were collected but must go through either a school district or the local conservation district. This year the GCCD received this grant and were able to assist a local Arkansas Youth Shooting Sports Program. AYSSP strives to bring the joys of the great outdoors and the rewards of safely learning to shoot to young Arkansans. The funds were used to purchase a new trap machine and cart, ammo and clays for the Center Fork Bird Busters. Through this program, local youth are made aware of the importance of our natural resources in order for programs like these to be available in the future.



ANRC GRANTS TO DISTRICT

Through a grant provided by ADA NRD, the GCCD began a project with Lake Hamilton School District to revive Wild Wolf Park. With a new Outdoor Science/PE course to be offered, the park was the perfect setting. Originally constructed in the early 90's, Wild Wolf Park Nature Trail and Outdoor Classroom needed repairs and renovations. In order for the area to be utilized to its fullest, many changes would need to take place. Many areas of the approximately 2000 foot trail had been washed away. In order to decrease soil erosion, GCCD will provide culverts to control water flow as well as add water bars where needed. Once that is complete, city pit will be provided to repave the trail. We will also implement a tree species identification system throughout the park.



2020-2021 ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP



GCCD was proud to award a \$500 scholarship to Brynna Buhrmester. Brynna is 2020 graduate of Lake Hamilton High School. She is a 14 year member of 4-H, serving as president for 5 of those years, She has also served as an officer in her school's FFA chapter, assisted with the county-wide special needs rodeo and excelled while showing her animals at the local and state fairs. Brynna plans to attend Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia to pursue degrees in Agriculture Education and Athletic Training.

HOT SPRINGS GREENWAY POLLINATOR GARDEN

The GCCD worked along with the Hot Springs Master Gardeners and the City of Hot Springs Parks and Trails Department, to convert an overgrown area along the Greenway Trail into a pollinator garden. The area was cleaned up and then planted with various plant species beneficial to pollinators. District employees delivered and helped to spread over 600 cubic feet of mulch. GCCD then purchased metal edging that was placed around the garden beds to control weeds from invading the space. A sign, explaining the purpose of the garden and the importance of pollinators in regard to conservation, will be placed this fall.



OUR PARTNERS

